



THE PLS GAZETTE

**PUBLISHED BY
THE PENNSYLVANIA LIVE STEAMERS, INC.**

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Presidents Message

This year marks another milestone, the 80th anniversary of PLS. This gazette features a republication of the very first PLS Gazette. We hope to have several more historic articles about PLS this year. A lot has changed over the span of time but one thing remains the same, it is how we enjoy our great live steam hobby together!

Spring is not far away and soon we will be at trackside again putting this unusually cold and snowy winter behind. I hope you have had success in your winter maintenance and building projects.

The paver project has picked up momentum over the winter. We have a total of 11 pledges totaling \$12,100. The goal is to reach \$17,000. Please consider helping us to reach the goal. Just another \$4900 gets us to the goal.

The annual business meeting is coming up on March 21st. The two main agenda items are to review and approve the 2026 operating budget and elections for the board of directors. More information about those items will be coming soon.

Please note that this year June, August and October have Saturday run days in place of the traditional Sunday runs. August and October Saturday run days also include the monthly membership meetings at an early start of 9:30am then immediately followed by the run day.

See you at the tracks soon. Let's have a safe and fun year!

John Forsythe
PLS President

PLS Elections

PLS Elections will be held during the Annual Membership Meeting on Saturday March 21, 2026, at 12:30 PM.

Voting will be by secret ballot to elect a President, Secretary, Treasurer and three Board of Directors.

• **Nominees** for the open office positions:

President: John Forsythe

Secretary: Paul Miller

Treasurer: Mark Cahill

• Nominees for the 3 open **Board of Directors:**

Fred Daddi

Joe Gotlewski

Rob Kuhlman

Larry Moss

Bonny Slater

2026 PLS Upcoming Events

- Sat, Feb 21 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM
- Sat, Mar 21 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM
Annual Meeting – 12:30 PM
Annual Elections
- Sat, Apr 18 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM
SPRING CLEAN UP - AM
Membership Meeting – 12:30 PM
- Sun, Apr 26 BOILER TESTING
Run Day Members and Guest
(Rain Date May 3)
- Sat, May 16 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM
Membership Meeting – 12:30 PM
- Fri, May 22 SPRING MEET – Members & Guest
- Sat, May 23 Breakfast & Lunch, Pot Luck Dinner
- Sun, May 24 Breakfast & Lunch
- Sat, May 30 Perkiomen Community Day
Run Day – Township Residents

Club Membership News

PLS welcomes new Associate member Tom Schurman.



Membership Gauge

As of Feb. 12, PLS has:

95 Regular Members

8 Probationary

150 Associate Members

2 Honorary Members.

Donation Acknowledgements

PLS wishes to thank the following for donations received by February 12:

Erich Boldt Sr, Paul Miller, Kathleen Parris, William Bower, Ronald Marburger, Chris Becker, Ross Magee, Richard Stoughton, Doug Brooker, James Milo, Carmen Visalli, Edward Kabak, David Laird, Bill Shields, Thomas Narrigan, Neil Sardinias, John Caldwell, Newell Godschall Jr, Robert Kuhlman, Richard Poletto, Jared Schoenly, Terry Weinstein, David Bucher, Mayland Crosson, Elizabeth Emmert, Matthew Haines, Alan Redeker, Daniel Sclavi, Domenic Zampogna, Wayne Baldwin, Marc Carpino, Roy Nelson, Susan Borders, Penny Landgraf, Gita Talmage, Jim Adams, Jay Forsythe, Franklin Webb, Rich Falzone, James Benko, David Klotz, Joseph Rohanna, Dale Woodland, Barry Shapin, David Taylor, Rose Ann Wagner, Don Maleta, Michael Tillger, Stan Richmond, David Van Winkle, and Larry Moss.

Pennsylvania Live Steamers, Inc.

President	John Forsythe	of Blooming Glen, PA	john@tcsdcc.com
Secretary	Paul Miller	of West Chester, PA	secretary@palivesteamers.org
Treasurer	Mark Cahill	of Perkasio, PA	treasurer@palivesteamers.org
Gazette Editor	TBD - Paul Miller (Interim)		

Board of Directors

Steve Mallon, mallonmusic@gmail.com - Term Expires 3/27,
Bonny Slater, , quiltnsewlad@yahoo.com - Term Expires 3/26
Bruce Barrett, greenjeeps2@yahoo.com - Term Expires 3/27

Fred Daddi, F_Daddi@yahoo.com - Term Expires 3/26
Peter Brown, peteprivate@yahoo.com - Term Expires 3/27

Pennsylvania Live Steamers, Inc. • P.O. Box 26202 • Collegeville, PA 19426-0202 • www.palivesteamers.org

PLS Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2026

Income	Expenses	
100 · Donations	200 · Utilities	224 · Corporate
100.10 · Run Day \$650.00	200.10 · Electric \$2,700.00 ↑	224.10 · Legal & Prof. Fees \$2,545.00
100.40 · Pot Luck \$170.00	200.30 · Septic Tank \$1,440.00	224.11 · Delaware Corp. Tax \$75.00
100.50 · Picnic \$100.00	200.40 · Portable Toilets \$1,800.00 ↑	224.20 · Office General \$270.00
100.90 · Other Donations \$10,000.00	200.60 · Dumpster \$2,700.00 ↑	224.30 · Property Tax \$5,800.00 ↑
Total 100 · Donations \$10,920.00	200.70 · Misc Utilities \$0.00	224.40 · Sales Tax \$70.00
	Total 200 · Utilities \$8,640.00	224.60 · Office Postage \$305.00
120 · Dues	210 · Miscellaneous Expense	224.70 · Insurance \$5,200.00
120.10 · Regular Member \$12,480.00 ↑	210.20 · Picnic \$300.00	224.80 · Corporate Printing \$300.00
120.20 · Associate Member \$5,215.00 ↓	210.30 · Pot Luck \$300.00	224.99 · Corporate Misc \$100.00
Total 120 · Dues \$17,695.00	210.40 · Security \$0.00	Total 224 · Corporate \$14,665.00
	Total 210 · Misc Expense \$600.00	225 · Sales
130 · Items Sold	220 · Maintenance	225.10 · Kitchen \$0.00
130.20 · Coal \$20.00	220.11 · Mach Shop Supplies \$0.00	225.20 · Snacks \$300.00
130.50 · Water/Ice Cream \$450.00	220.20 · Building #1 \$1,200.00	225.30 · Water/Ice Cream \$600.00
130.65 · Snacks \$600.00	220.30 · Building #2-8 \$2,000.00 ↑	225.40 · Table Sales \$1,500.00
130.80 · Kitchen Sales \$0.00	220.40 · Gauge 1 \$1,000.00	Total 225 · Sales \$2,400.00
130.90 · Sales Table Taxable \$625.00 ↑	220.50 · Track \$10,000.00 ↑	226 · Special Projects
130.91 · Sales Table Non-Tax \$1,225.00 ↑	220.60 · Mower \$900.00	227 · '21 Flood Expenses
Total 130 · Items Sold \$2,920.00	220.70 · Signals \$420.00	227.10 · Building #1 \$0.00
140 · Storage Trax Fees	220.80 · Gas Mowing \$280.00	227.11 · Building #2 - #6 \$0.00
140.30 · Building #3 Rental \$5,302.00	220.90 · Gas Track \$200.00	227.12 · Rebuild Bathrooms \$0.00
140.60 · Building #6 Rental \$2,592.00	220.91 · Club Locomotive \$500.00	227.13 · Rebuild Electrical \$0.00
140.80 · Building #8 Rental \$721.00	220.94 · Fire Extinguishers \$400.00	Total 227 · '21 Flood Expense \$0.00
Total 140 · Storage Trax Fees \$8,615.00	220.96 · Grounds \$15,000.00 ↑	Total Expenses \$64,368.00
Total Income \$40,150.00	220.99 · Misc. Maintenance \$1,400.00	
	Total 220 · Maintenance \$33,300.00	
	223 · Communications	
	223.10 · Gazette-Postage \$300.00	
	223.20 · Gazette-Printing \$720.00	
	223.30 · Other Printing \$240.00	
	223.40 · Computer \$650.00	
	223.50 · Internet \$1,773.00	
	223.60 · Community Support \$125.00	
	223.70 · Waiver Sheets \$75.00	
	223.80 · Web Page \$880.00 ↑	
	223.99 · Misc Comms \$0.00	
	Total 223 · Communications \$4,763.00	

FY 26 Projected Income Over/Under Expenses	\$24,218.00
On 4/1/25, FY 25 Projected Income Over/Under Expenses was:	\$7,828.00
As of 12/31/25, EOFY 25 revised projected Income Over/Under Expenses is:	\$14,132.00

EOFY = End Of Fiscal Year

PLS Gazette Tribute

As we enter our 80th Year I am changing back to the original Gazette letterhead and adding our logo on the front page. All 6 issues this year will display the old letterhead as a tribute. I am also republishing Gazette Number 1 inside this issue (see Pages 5-7). As created by our first editor the late Bob Thomas back in Feb. 1970. Recently long time Member Bob Blackson provided to me pristine copies of Number 1,2 &3 (Thanks Bob).

It appears to me they used a process called Mimeograph back in the day. This process gave them the ability to publish and print multiple copies. The Mimeograph process was created back in the 1960's and lasted into the 1980's. This gave organizations like Schools, Churches and Clubs like ours to communicate and or self-publish. At the time it also was good way to share all the news as the club was preparing for a new home (see Bob's first article). I have taken the opportunity with this Gazette to name this issue, Volume 80 Number 1 to better align with our years together and not the years we have had the PLS Gazette.

Paul Miller
Secretary PLS, Inc.
PLS Gazette Editor

PLS Paver Project

As of February 10, the total is

Pledges: 11

Total Amount Pledged: \$12,100

Pledge Target: \$17,000- base cost*

So far, we have raised about 71% of the total amount need to commence with the project.

According to the Pledge card we have until June 1, 2026, to raise the remaining \$4900- quite possible.

If you need a pledge card, contact Mark Cahill or Pat Murphy.

Thank you everyone who have pledged amounts toward this project.

* = base cost does not include the estimated \$2000 needed to engrave the 24+ names for the memorial section. This could be raised in several different ways at a later time if needed. See image below for an example at the Central Pasco track in Florida.



PLS Gazette Tribute

THE PLS GAZETTE

PUBLISHED BY
THE PENNSYLVANIA LIVE STEAMERS, INC.

EDITOR: ROBERT G. THOMAS 216 SUNRISE LANE PHILADELPHIA, PA. 19118

NUMBER 1

FEBRUARY, 1970

ABOUT THE PLS GAZETTE

For the next several years events affecting our club will be occurring at a rapid pace as we attempt to locate a new site for our railroad and construct a new track. Recognizing the importance of keeping all members informed of these events, the Board of Directors agreed to establish a newsletter, to be published on a regular basis. The editorial policy will remain flexible, especially at first while it is determined just what form the paper should take. We are, after all, a live steam club, not a publishing company, and a newsletter should be given a role, and effort applied to it, only to an extent that will facilitate our primary objective of building and operating miniature locomotives. Therefore, I plan to cover only activities related to the club, including meeting and program announcements, action taken at meetings, status of land acquisition, events at the track, and news of members.

There is no reason to make the paper a one-sided affair; letters to the editor will be published if they are concise and germane to club members' interests. In addition I will welcome short manuscripts dealing with visits to other ME societies, our own meets, availability of material, etc. And most of all, short items describing the status of your locomotive construction are desired. These contributions as well as your criticisms and suggestions will be a great influence in determining the direction of our new venture. Let's hear from you!

MEETING NOTICE

There will be a Regular Meeting at 8 PM on Friday, February 20th in the Central Baptist Church of Wayne, Pa. Beside conducting ordinary business this will be "Bits and Pieces Night", when you can bring your latest model project for the other fellows to see. Bring your locomotive in its latest stage of construction, tools, stationary engines, car parts, or just drawings of what you intend to build. It seems to be a long winter, and everyone will be anxious to see what has been accomplished in the building season. Visitors are welcome.

The Board of Directors will meet at my home Monday evening, March 2.

OOPS! DEPARTMENT

A small technicality went unnoticed when the Associate Membership dues increase was approved last year. The amount of the dues is prescribed in our Bylaws so they will have to be changed at the February meeting to make the new rate legal.

PLS Gazette Tribute

LAND ACQUISITION

The land situation is presently no better than it was following the Arcola episode in spite of continued effort to secure ground. Buck Slayton's correspondence with Senator Schweiker with regard to obtaining a disused Nike site resulted in a letter from the GSA to the effect that the government will not be disposing of the land in the near future. A lead for an area in an industrial park was followed-up by Tom Willis but proved to be of no avail. Buck Slayton is preparing a new brochure for presentation to Montgomery County officials in the hopes of obtaining a suitable arrangement at the Wentz farm. Carl Dougherty is also accumulating material describing the club's activities which he will send to the heads of various groups known to be holders of vacant land and to at least one newspaper to widen the scope of our search.

In the meantime, I feel it is necessary to establish a schedule of action to avoid the predicament that will result if we have to vacate Ken Souser's land before a new location is secured. The schedule will work backward in time from our best estimate of the complete removal of track from Ken's, and will include time required for dismantling track, grading new property, new building construction, legal cycle associated with obtaining land, and the possibility of concessions we might have to make (property at a more distant location or at a higher price) if we do not settle the issue as presently approached. In effect, the proposed schedule will be a branching one that ensures meeting all our objectives or gives warning if we do not. Tom Willis and I are going to begin work on the schedule but we could use help, so if you are interested, and especially if you have had experience with this sort of thing in industry, how about volunteering to give us a hand?

NEW CLUB REPRESENTATIVE APPOINTED

The Board has appointed Ernie Anastasi as Representative of PLS to help improve our hospitality to guests and visitors. Ernie will be in contact with owners of engines to increase activity on running days. He will also form a group to make sure there is someone from the club watching out, not only for invited guests, but for visitors with an interest in live steam who can easily become lost in the shuffle of busy enginemen. A few individuals have taken it upon themselves to extend hospitality to visitors in the past, and the appointment of Ernie as Representative simply formalizes the activity to ensure its regularity. While it is true that there may be ten BS artists for each genuine live steamer, we can't afford to let that one get by, nor can we afford to high-hat anybody who at least has sufficient interest to stop and see what we are doing.

NEW TRACK DESIGN

Planning is under way for the construction standards of our new railroad. There are two reasons for doing this now, before we even have the new real estate. Firstly, we must obtain an estimate of how much the track will cost per hundred feet, or some other unit-length, in order to have some idea of the length of track we can build with the amount of money we have. (Or conversely, how much more money is required for the track we want.) A reasonably firm design must be established before the cost can be estimated. Secondly, if we begin now, we can benefit from numerous discussions and ideas from many sources in arriving at our final design, thus avoiding a last minute rush into construction without sufficient forethought.

PLS Gazette Tribute

George Thomas has been commissioned by the Board to prepare designs representing several approaches to track and roadbed construction. This work has been completed with sketches of four different designs, ranging from traditional ballasted roadbed to low-maintenance, precast concrete sub-structures. Although we would like to mail the sketches to everyone, postage costs would be too high; therefore, the sketches will be distributed to the members at the February meeting. All members are welcome to copies, so if you are unable to attend the meeting, send me a request and include a large stamped self-addressed envelope.

We are at a very early stage in track design so now is the time to make your ideas known for consideration.

TRUSTEES RE-APPOINTED

Doc Buyse and George Hoopes have been appointed to continue as trustees of our Reserve Fund during 1970.

DUES ARE DUE

If you intend to maintain your membership in PLS and have not yet paid your dues, please remit the correct amount with your dues statement at once so we can consolidate our finances for the coming year.

MISCELLANEOUS

Ben Haydon is going to Ireland and England this summer and is looking for suggestions on some ME societies to visit... Dan Crabtree has suffered from a bad attack of flu... Mal Pierson has developed a schedule for running days for 1970. It will be reproduced here next month. In the meantime, the schedule is being mailed to publications by Bill Scott... Carl Dougherty is busier than ever due to reorganization of Kewanee... Reports of individual's activities are solicited for this column... New Associate Member Fred Lach was introduced at the December meeting by Harold Lytle... Ken Souser is due to return from Florida vacation... New equipment dep't: Ernie Anastasi has just acquired a lathe that should help progress on his 0-4-0, and Tom Willis is now the proud owner of a Bridgeport... The Sussex (England) MLS News is received by me and will be available for loan at the next meeting. If you enjoy the Postbag column in M.E., you'll like these... The signal system and club car have been subjected to more vandalism... The PLS GAZETTE is typed by my wife, Phyllis. It is printed by Carl Dougherty... Seen in advertisement for HO UP Big Boy: "This was the most articulated locomotive ever built."

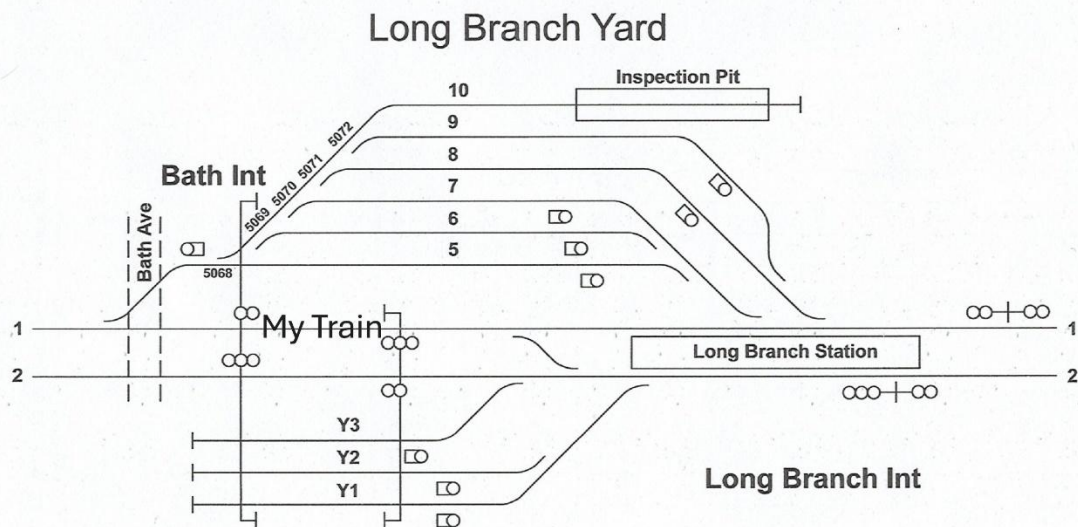
Tales From a Retired Engineer: "Rules In Effect"

Author: Mark Cahill

Of the many things a student engineer must learn are the physical characteristics of the RR territory he/she is expected to operate on. This includes knowing the location (by milepost) and appearance of all stations, interlockings, wayside signals, track numbers, speeds and the rules in effect at these places. As a student engineer, I did not find this voluminous amount of information difficult to comprehend. What did concern me was my ability (or lack thereof) to be able to recall specific information when needed.

I was extremely fortunate to be paired with several very senior instructor engineers at the start of the train-handling portion of my training. Collectively, these engineers had decades of experience. Each one knew how challenging it is to teach the proper train-handling techniques to someone who had never sat in the seat before. All of them said, "Don't worry, I won't let you make a mistake". Those words certainly reduced the anxiety I was experiencing.

My very first training assignment was on the North Jersey Coast Line. I signed up at Long Branch Yard where I met my instructor engineer. He was very experienced. We looked at the lineup of equipment in the yard and found that our equipment was a 9-car push-pull set with the locomotive leading and it was on main track 1, not on a yard track.



Long Branch is an interesting location. In addition to the station, there are 9 yard tracks, 4 of them stub-ended (Y1,Y2,Y3,10) and 5 of them through tracks (5,6,7,8,9) with 2 main tracks (1,2) bisecting the yard. There are 2 interlockings, "**Long Branch**" to the east of the yard and "**Bath**" to the west. The 3 stub-ended yard tracks north of the main tracks can only be accessed through "**Long Branch**" interlocking. The 5 through tracks on the south side of the main tracks can be accessed from either interlocking ("**Long Branch**" or "**Bath**"). All the yard track interlocking signals are of the dwarf type.

Tales From a Retired Engineer: “Rules In Effect”

However, the main track interlocking signals are mounted on an overhead bridge just west of the station which itself is within “**Long Branch**” interlocking limits. Remember this. The location of this signal is critical to my story.

On a weekday morning, every yard track had a trainset on it including main track 1. Recall our 9-car push pull set was located on main track 1. The trainset just barely fit in the “pocket” between “**Long Branch**” and “**Bath**” interlocking home signals (see location of “My Train” on above Yard diagram). After boarding the locomotive, I began the setup procedure (i.e. energizing the master controller and cutting in the air brakes, headlight on, markers off). Another crew member was on the hind end of the train, and we performed the required Class II brake test.

My instructor engineer then asked “are we ready to go?” I replied, “I suppose so”. Releasing the brakes and advancing the throttle, I move the train east and spot it near the end of the station platform. Then came the zinger. My instructor engineer asks me, “what was your last signal?” Immediately I silently thought “what last signal?, did I miss a signal?” I answered “Jimmy, I don’t know”. He then proceeds to tell me, “Your last signal was on the overhead signal bridge”. The problem was that we were so close to the signal, you could not see it through the windshield. You had to either open the side window or side door, lean out and look almost straight up to see the signal. Needless to say, I was humbled and mortified. I had moved my first train one train length and had already made my first mistake. The good news was that my instructor engineer knew that the signal I had missed WAS displayed. He was actually hoping I did what I did to teach me a valuable lesson about always knowing where your next signal is. He would not have let me move the train had the signal NOT been displayed. He told me he had one other student engineer who had done the exact same thing as I did so at least I was not the very first victim!

For those of you who may have read some of my previous stories, this situation would have been perfect for “Mr. Stop Sock”!

During my initial two-week stint, my instructor engineer told me two very important things about the engineer craft, things I never forgot and always remembered to tell all of the student engineers I myself trained throughout my career. He said to never assume you’ve “seen it all”. During a *typical* tour of duty, nothing unusual happens, but every now and then something does. It doesn’t matter how many years of experience you have (few or many). Eventually, something crazy will happen and that’s when your understanding of the rules in effect becomes your guide as to what to do next. He went on to say that if you are unsure about what to do, don’t move then ask yourself the following three questions: “Where am I?”; “What are the rules in effect here?”; “What is my authority to move?”. If you ask and answer these 3 questions, you will never get in trouble. He then added if you cannot easily answer the 3 questions from memory, pull out your timetable and rule book(s) to find the answers. Better to take a delay, than to guess wrong and go out of service or worse, cause a catastrophe.

Later in my career, when I would routinely get student engineers or conductors riding my head-end qualifying on the physical characteristics or student engineers performing train-handling, I would often quiz them on their understanding of the rules.

Tales From a Retired Engineer: “Rules In Effect”

Then it usually hits them. The rule for track 1 west of “**Menlo**” is 251 East. So, if you accept the “Restricting” signal and proceed west on track 1, you are now occupying a track for which you have no authority (a de-certifiable offense). To legally proceed west on a track signaled only in the eastward direction, what do you need? That’s right, a dispatcher-issued Form D Line 2. Did you receive such a Form D? Oops, I did not. Too bad. Do some time on the street.

The proper thing to do is to stop, not accept the signal at “**Menlo**”, call the dispatcher and simply say “... I am stopped at your signal at “**Menlo**” on track 1”. Hopefully, he/she will look at their model board and recognize their mistake. If/when they do, hopefully the dispatcher’s response will be “OK to take the signal away at “**Menlo**”?” to which you reply, “Roger, OK to take the signal away at “**Menlo**””. The signal aspect drops to “Stop”. After the interlocking “timeout” period expires, you see the switch flop over to cross you over to track 2 (a 261 track) and the signal comes back up to a “Limited Clear”. You are now OK to proceed. This radio exchange of words keeps both you AND the dispatcher in service without “diming” him/her in for their routing mistake (silently, the dispatcher is thanking you for saving his/her hide and hopefully they will remember you when you need a favor).

Any signal displaying a “Restricting” aspect usually means you are entering non-signaled territory (e.g. a yard), entering a 251 track against the current of traffic, closing up on another train or there is possibly broken rail ahead.

Most students were humbled by answering incorrectly but many of them wanted me to quiz them some more. Like my first instructor engineer, I think challenging the students in this way eventually made them better and safer engineers.

Given any “system” involving controlled movement (e.g. air traffic control, driving, RRs), it is paramount that EVERYONE understands the rules and applies them correctly all the time. Most rulebooks are written in blood because something bad happened once and when it did, no rule existed at that time to prevent it. Not the way you want to build a rulebook but, unfortunately, it is necessary.

“Stay safe and keep’m on the rails”.

PLS Advertisements

Equipment For Sale

1.5” Scale rolling stock, 7.25” Gauge

- 6 ft Centerbeam Flatcar with bench
- 6 ft Flatcar with two boat seats
- 7-1/2 ft Centerbeam Flatcar with bench
- 4-1/2 ft Flatcar with one seat
- Alco C-420 Electric Locomotive

Text to 610-291-9902

Pete Brown



The PLS GAZETTE

P.O. Box 26202
Collegetown, PA 19426-0202

FIRST CLASS



The New Years Day tradition continues, a run day on 1-1-2026. It was very cold but as you can see for the first time I believe we had more Steam Locomotives then all the rest.